

# Wyoming Game and Fish Department Hunter Education Newsletter



## Coordinator's Comments

**Once in a Lifetime** - We have all heard the phrase “*once in a lifetime*” to describe something significant or an event which is unusually special. Often we see hunts advertised as “*once in a lifetime*” and we as hunters often dream about the day when we can make one of these special hunts happen. Alaska, Argentina, and Africa come to mind but Wyoming sure is the land of plenty when it comes to hunting opportunities, both with variety and quality of hunts.

Well, I did get my “*once in a lifetime*” hunting opportunity this past September. After 30 plus years of applying, I finally was fortunate to draw an area 5 bighorn sheep tag.

After getting the tag I had great anticipation and the preparation started, including the shopping and purchasing of cool new gear. As the summer progressed, I had the best wishes of many friends and the family. Not only did I have the time and support from my supervisor (it seemed all of the WGFD and HE cadre), the good health to tackle this rigorous hunt, and the means to make this happen, I was able to live this dream and share the experience with my son-in-law. With all the adventures and mis-adventures of hunting for a ram in wild country, I truly did have a “*once in a lifetime*” hunt.



Jeff Shideman was a much valued hunting partner on my “*once in a lifetime* Bighorn Sheep DIY dream hunt.”



A “*once in lifetime*” private lesson. Expo shotgun range volunteer Heather Shideman gets one-on-one instruction from Olympic medalist Corey Cogdell.

In the afterglow of harvesting my much coveted mature ram, I started reflecting about other “*once in a lifetime*” experiences. Hunter Education (HE) classes kept coming to mind. For all practical purposes a HE class is a once in a lifetime experience for most people. If the students in a HE class are engaged and the students feel included in the class the “*once in a lifetime*” HE experience becomes a significant and special introduction into the hunting community.

As you get ready for your upcoming 2013 HE classes, I would like you think about the influence, as a HE instructor, you have upon these students. The HE class these students are enrolled in, may be just another one of the many HE classes you do in 2013 but it is their “*once in a lifetime*” Hunter Education class experience.

Thanks to the dedicated HE instructors who strive to make this “*once in a lifetime*” HE experience significant and special.

*“Conserving Wildlife — Serving People”*

## A Sense of Place

### Misuse of the label Hunter raises ire of HE instructors everywhere !!

**"Hunter Shoots Golden Eagle"** - A La Crosse man was sentenced to 50 hours community service after admitting to shooting a golden eagle. Chad L. Irvin, 35, pleaded guilty to shooting an eagle twice with a Remington shotgun when he was hunting Jan. 9th. He was coyote hunting from his truck when he saw the eagle, according to the U.S. Attorney. Two days after it was shot, the injured eagle was reported to the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, which recovered the bird. It was taken to the department's regional office, and then to the zoo, which has a raptor recovery center. The bird's legs were paralyzed, so it was euthanized. Irvin will serve community service working with hunter education. He will also have three years of supervised probation, where he can not hunt, fish, trap, guide or accompany anyone participating in those activities. He must pay a \$5,000 fine and \$3,000 in restitution - \$2,500 to the state and \$500 to the veterinarian. He also forfeits the shotgun.. (THE HUTCHINSON NEWS staff- August 21).

**Hooray for the response by Kansas HE instructor Ray Fisher** (Master HE instructor Fischer was a guest speaker at the 2012 Wyoming New HE Instructor Academy)

Dear Sir: I read with interest the article from 8-21 on the 'hunter' shooting a golden eagle. The 'staff' that authored the piece likely also has the same thought when they see a traffic sign, old mail box, or old farm machinery riddled with bullet holes. It's ok. Lots of people have the same misguided thoughts. I urge you to attend a local Hunter Education class and change your perception. Hunter Education is mandatory for hunters to purchase licenses in all states and the Kansas program is the envy of all programs across the nation. One of the main foci in the class is the hunters' ethos and responsible behavior. Students learn that improper use of firearms **is not the work of the hunter, but rather vandals and poachers**. Also learned is that hunting is a privilege and unethical and irresponsible behavior has dire consequences. If we as hunters ever lose that privilege it will be because of actions such as this. Please do not give the hunting fraternity a black eye by labeling the felon in the story as a 'hunter'.



*Green River Region Supervisor Steve De-Cecco examines a deer shot and killed with a crossbow target arrow. This is not the act of hunters but of poachers and must be clearly understood by all. Photo by Lucy Diggins-Wold*

## HE Recruitment and Retention



*Photo by Jackson Hunter Education instructor Alan Brumsted*

### JACKSON HOLE GALS LEARN SHOTGUNNING

This past summer Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) partnered with the Jackson Hole Shooting Sports Foundation (JHSSF) to conduct a ladies shotgun clinic at the Jackson Hole Gun Club. The clinic was attended by 16 women of all skill levels, including some women who had never even touched a gun before.

Participants handled 12, 20, 28, and .410 gauge shotguns and ammo; learned safe firearms handling and storage; and practiced shooting, all under the watchful eye of experienced instructors. Participants received one-on-one instruction from experienced NSCA trained instructors Heather Shideman of Cody and WGFD Hunter Education Coordinator Jim Dawson.

"The ladies clinic offers a welcoming environment for ladies wanting to learn the skills necessary to be a successful shooter," said Dawson. "The class is designed to be supportive, friendly, and non-competitive. For some, it's just a matter of feeling more comfortable around a firearm; others become life-long shooters."

The clinic was made possible by a generous donation from the JHSSF working in conjunction with the WGFD Hunter Education program. "Clearly this was a positive experience for everyone involved, especially the ladies," said JHSSF board member and HE instructor Alan Brumsted. "We hope to make this an annual event for Jackson."

"This is a great venue for introducing new shotgunners to the sport with wonderful support from the JHSSF board of directors and range manager Dan Dugan," said Dawson. "I hope to be involved in future clinics with the JHSSF folks."



## Tools of the Trade

### **An unnerving “once in a lifetime” occurrence** Report made by WGFD Warden Chris Baird

On October 1, 2012, at around 1000 hours, I (Warden Baird) was in contact with two hunters in a late model four door Dodge truck. I had pulled alongside the truck so that my driver's door was parallel to the hunter's driver's door. The hunter did not have proof of completing a hunter safety course. I was in the process of handling the violation, sitting in the driver's seat of my truck with the door open and my feet on floor toward the door jam (quartered toward the hunter). The hunter (in his driver's seat) turned around to reposition two rifles (I was not aware of the location of the rifles) lying across the back seat. His rifle (a 7 mm) was lying toward the back of the seat pointed toward the driver's side when it accidentally discharged. The round entered the inside of his rear driver's door where it fragmented into two parts, it left the outside of the door where the two pieces continued to fragment until they entered the upper rear of my driver's side front fender. This was about twenty four inches from the back of the steering wheel. The fragments continued into the truck where they nearly completely severed the main wiring harness where it enters the cab. This completely disabled the vehicle. Most of the fragments seemed to have stopped on the brake helper behind the master cylinder.

The report from the rifle apparently severely disoriented both men in the truck. The driver asked what had just happened and I informed him that he had just shot thru his truck into mine. I instructed both men to get out of the vehicle without touching anything in the cab. I had them stand well behind my truck while I photographed the scene. Sometime between the shot and exiting the vehicle the hunter had ejected the spent shell from the rifle. I did not see him do this. I cleared and engaged safeties on both guns and returned them as they had been. The other rifle did not have a round in the chamber, but had a full magazine. Both vehicles were left as they were at the time of the shot until Lincoln County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) arrived to investigate.

After I had photographed the scene and secured the weapons I called SALECS (State Agency Law Enforcement Communication System), my supervisor, and LCSO. The hunter was cited for reckless endangerment and required to appear in court. The truck was towed to Evanston Motor Company who will fax an estimate for total repair to the GR office to be forwarded to the hunter's insurance company. The incident occurred on top of Commissary Ridge just south of the head of Boney Canyon. Please see attached photos.



This bullet hole is from one of the two reported hunting related firearms incidents in 2012. photo by Warden Chris Baird

### **BE AWARE OF YOUR TARGET AND WHAT IS BEYOND**

*Lucy Diggins-Wold, Green River I & E Specialist*

After two recent accidental pronghorn antelope deaths, officials with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department are reminding anyone who is target shooting to pay attention to their target and what is beyond that target.

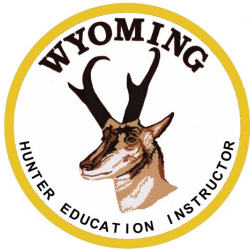
Rawlins Game Wardens Brady Frude and Bill Brinegar investigated two accidental pronghorn antelope deaths, one at the Sinclair rifle range and one at the Rawlins Outdoor Gun Club.

“Whether you are target shooting at a rifle range, at a gun club, on federal lands, or anywhere else for that matter, make sure you know your target and what lies beyond that target,” Frude said. “We have already had two accidental deaths of pronghorns, and these deaths could have been prevented had the shooter paid close attention. If you are taking a young person out to target shoot make sure they, too, are aware of their target and what is beyond that target. We can't stress this safety practice enough.”

“If you are going to a range that is new to you look at your surroundings before you start target practice,” Brinegar said. “The two pronghorn were shot by non-residents who were not familiar with the local pronghorn that are accustomed to the sounds of gunshots. Look down range at your target and what is beyond that target before you do any shooting.”



Along with teaching the importance of identifying the target and beyond, HE instructors emphasize the importance of muzzle control in and around vehicles, the importance of not having loaded firearms in a vehicle, and how to safely cross fences. This above photo was sent in by Dennis Koch, longtime Worland HE instructor, and clearly depicts how to engage students in their “once in a lifetime” HE class. Photo courtesy of Dennis Koch



Check the newly updated WGFD web page for all sorts of wildlife and Hunter Education information  
<http://wgfd.wyo.gov>

**Wyoming Game and Fish Department**  
**Jim Dawson Hunter Education Coordinator**  
 3030 Energy Lane. Casper, WY 82604  
 Phone: 307.473.3439 Fax: 307.473.3433  
**NEW - Email: [james.dawson@wyo.gov](mailto:james.dawson@wyo.gov)**  
**[margaret.james@wyo.gov](mailto:margaret.james@wyo.gov)**

*As Hunter Education Volunteer Instructors you are a voice for the Department's mission:*

*"Conserving Wildlife — Serving People"*

*The Department's message that we as HE instructors teach has been established by the Game and Fish Commission and includes six major topics:*

1. *Hunter Responsibility and Ethics*
2. *Wildlife Conservation and Management*
3. *Firearms and Firearm Safety*
4. *Game & Fish Statutes and Regulations*
5. *Game Care & Wildlife Identification*
6. *Outdoor Safety*

## Dates to Remember

### 2013 Hunter Education Instructor Workshops

Invite letters to HE workshops will be mailed to active HE instructors within the hosting region. 2013 workshops will be conducted at the WGFD region offices.

**Cody Region** - January 19th  
**Sheridan Region** - March 1st  
**Casper Region** - Feb 2nd  
**Jackson Region** - August 10th

### Other 2013 dates to remember:

New HE Instructor Academy, July 19-21  
 IHEA-USA conference, April 1-5th in San Antonio  
 YHEC, June 8th in Upton  
 4H State Shoot, July 12-14th in Douglas  
 WGFD Youth Con Ed. Camp, July 28th-Aug 2nd

## Regional and Statewide

### HUNTER EDUCATION CHANGES FOR 2013

**Inert Firearms Sets** - The training sets we have in the state have been repaired and are ready to be used in HE classes. Whether using inert or intact firearms it is imperative that no live ammunition be brought into a HE classroom. The only time live ammo should be present is at the range for live fire activities.

**Online Hunter Education** - The changes for the online HE course and the accompanying Internet Field Day (IFD) have been in the works for several years and it looks like we will be able to kick the new course off early in 2013. As details are finalized the cadre will be notified. It is essential that all understand that the traditional course is the preferred method for all with the online course still designed for the working adult. These methods are two distinct and separate ways of obtaining the same Wyoming HE card. If an active HE instructor would like to become an IFD assessor a training session is required with the HE coordinator.

**CHAPTER 26 REGULATIONS GOVERNING HUNTER SAFETY** - The chapter 26 regulations as determined by the WGF Commission dictate how the Wyoming hunter education program is to be conducted and these Regs are periodically refined. Many instructors witnessed the changes in 2008 and now the latest version of the HE regulations have been finalized and signed by WGF Commission President Aaron Clark on July 10, 2012. Included in this newsletter mailing is a copy of the latest Chapter 26 regulations which should be placed in your instructor handbook to replace the 2008 version. Please take the time to look over the changes and I look forward to discussing the changes at the upcoming winter HE instructor workshops.

**CHAPTER 32 REGULATION GOVERNING FIREARM CARTRIDGES AND ARCHERY EQUIPMENT** - Many of you have been attending public meetings and took the time to comment on the changes to the regulations pertaining to legal firearms for hunting in Wyoming. These regulatory changes will be finalized in November with a copy also included in this newsletter mailing. These Chapter 32 changes will impact how the firearms and Laws/Regs sections are taught in HE classes and will be a major point of emphasis in the 2013 HE workshop series. Please expect to use the newest version of the Important Hunter Information (yellow sheet) in your 2013 classes. The format of this supplemental fact sheet will be slightly different and the old version (yellow sheet) can not be used. Please recycle any that you may have left over from previous classes.